Strategic Operations Director

Location: The Music Works Gloucester Hub (with regular travel across TMW Forest and Glos sites); a minimum of 3 days per week on-site is required

Contract: Fixed Term, 2.5 years

Salary: £54,000 to £58,000 per annum pro rata (depending on experience)

Hours: Part Time, 30h worked over 4 days a week (0.8 FTE)

Report to: CEO & Artistic Director

Responsible for: People & Wellbeing Manager, Operations Manager

About Us

The Music Works (TMW) is a Gloucester-based registered charity that transforms the lives of young people who are often furthest from opportunity, and those most at risk. Since 2020, we have tripled our reach and turnover, expanded our programmes across two music hubs with industry-standard facilities, and grown a staff team that delivers meaningful, evidence-based interventions across Gloucestershire and beyond. We now reach over 8,000 young people annually through programmes spanning community music provision, music education, music mentoring, alternative provision, and creative industry development. We hold a joint publishing venture with Warner Chappell Music through our commercial partnership with Onatura, and our model is sector-recognised and attracting increasing national attention.

We are now at a pivotal moment where our growth needs to be reflected in our infrastructure, and we need dedicated operational leadership to build the systems, processes and data capability that will allow us to fulfil our national advocacy potential. This role is central to that ambition.

Here is an introduction to our work: About The Music Works

Working at The Music Works

We're a team of passionate, committed people who genuinely believe in what we do. We offer a creative and dynamic working environment, a commitment to your professional development, and the chance to help shape a national organisation at a pivotal moment in its journey. As a senior leader at TMW, you'll have real autonomy, real influence, and a CEO who wants to hear your thinking.

THE ROLE

This is a significant and genuinely distinctive opportunity. We are creating this fixed-term Strategic Operations Director role to help us become a more efficient, data-informed and strategically agile organisation. The role requires focused, dedicated leadership. It will suit someone who is energised by complexity, motivated by the prospect of building something that outlasts their tenure, and who finds genuine satisfaction in creating order, clarity and capability from the ground up. You'll have a keen eye for detail and a genuine love of building systems and processes that make everyone else's work easier. At the same time, you'll understand the importance of collaboration and openness and will be able to work flexibly, creatively and sensitively to deliver best practice within The Music Works unique context and culture.

You will begin your tenure with an initial organisational audit to assess where things currently stand across our structure, systems and capacity. Critically, you will begin the implementation of our new CRM system, seamlessly embedding the system over the first two years of your tenure and giving us, for the first time - a single reliable source for participant data, impact tracking, stakeholder engagement and commercial activity. You will build the data, impact and operational infrastructure that underpins everything we do, and develop the policies and processes that will future-proof The Music Works.

In the final six months of the role, building directly on your initial audit and in-post experience of embedding the CRM and leading the operations and HR functions, you will lead a formal organisational review that assesses our structure, identifies efficiencies and makes recommendations for ongoing organisational development as the charity moves into a new era.

You will also work in close coordination with our incoming commercial consultant, ensuring the CRM is configured from the outset to serve commercial functions alongside charitable ones, from sales pipeline tracking to membership management infrastructure.

This role directly enables our CEO, Malaki Patterson, to focus on external partnership development, advocacy, artistic vision, and building the national profile of The Music Works. You'll be his operational counterpart, keeping the engine running while he builds the road ahead and strengthening the Senior Leadership Team as a whole by enabling them to focus on their priority deliverables rather than getting pulled into operational firefighting.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Operational Systems and Process Development

- Undertake a structured audit of organisational processes, identifying priority areas for improvement across cross-departmental workflows, communication and administration, this is distinct from, and feeds into, the structural Organisational Review conducted in the final six months (see below)
- Develop practical operational policies and processes that are fit for purpose both now and as the organisation grows
- Build organisational processes that support clear lines of accountability across the team, separating strategic leadership functions from operational management
- Work alongside Heads of Team to ensure new systems and processes are embedded at programme and operational level, not just at senior leadership
- Create mechanisms for organisational learning, enabling teams to capture and share practice insights and ensuring delivery data informs strategic decision-making
- Document processes, methodologies and quality standards that will also feed into our national scaling ambitions
- Develop standard legal and contract templates (for example supplier agreements and partnership MOUs), working with external legal advisors as needed, to reduce risk and duplication of effort
- Deliver a 'single source of truth' for policies and procedures, ensuring that staff-facing policies are easy to find, accessible and always up-to-date, and formalise the information flows and decision-making structures that sit beneath them

CRM Implementation and Data Infrastructure

- Lead the phased implementation of the new CRM across all departments, working alongside Cygnet (our CRM implementation partner) and the existing operations team
- Develop and embed a comprehensive staff training programme with role-specific guidance, ensuring organisation-wide understanding of how the system serves each team's particular work
- Build and maintain a sustained adoption plan including quarterly audits, iterative system refinement, and development of reporting and insight functions
- Configure the CRM from the outset to serve commercial functions, including customer relationship management, sales pipeline tracking, commercial booking systems, and membership management, working directly with the commercial consultant
- In collaboration with SLT and the Data Group, design the infrastructure to document, share and track data and impact that gives us a clear, consistent

picture of our reach, outcomes and effectiveness, aligned to our existing outcomes framework and Theory of Change
- Ensure our data infrastructure always meets compliance, safeguarding and GDPR requirements
- Lead internal change management, helping staff understand and embrace new systems, ways of working and organisational expectations across both hubs and multiple programmes
- Support the Senior Leadership Team in shifting TMW's internal culture from reactive to strategic, and from process-light to process-confident
- Design and embed internal communications rhythms, including team days, team meetings and internal comms systems, that keep everyone connected as we grow

Organisational Review

- At the start of the contract, conduct an initial organisational audit to establish a clear baseline of our structure, systems and capacity, including the hardware staff use to access our software systems, with recommendations arising from this
- In the final six months of the contract, building directly on the initial audit, lead a formal organisational review working with Directors, staff teams and the Board of Trustees
- Assess what the leadership team and operational structure should look like once systems are fully embedded and the organisation is functioning more efficiently
- Conduct a skills audit of the existing team, identify structural gaps, and develop recommendations for restructure where appropriate
- Ensure the review process is inclusive, evidence-based and takes into account staff experience, operational data and external sector insight
- Conclude the post with a managed handover, ensuring systems, ways of working and operational frameworks are owned and sustained at Heads of Team level within the permanent structure

Strategic Leadership and CEO Support

- Serve as a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, contributing to organisational strategy, risk management, decision-making, and an inclusive, values-led culture
- Support the CEO in preparing for board meetings, funder relationships and organisational reporting where operational data and insight are needed, including managing day-to-day board relationships and supporting organisation-wide governance and decision-making processes
- Provide effective line management to the People + Wellbeing Manager and Operations Manager, supporting their professional development, wellbeing and performance

- Represent TMW at relevant sector events, networks and partnerships where operational expertise and credibility are required

GENERAL

- Maintain records of feedback & evaluation from young people through our data capture system
- Be committed to putting young people at the heart of everything we do
- Promote and comply with all our policies and practices
- Undertake any other reasonable duties, commensurate with the level of the post to ensure the smooth running of the charity

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We're flexible about career backgrounds and not focused on qualifications, but we do need someone who can demonstrate the following:

Essential

- Proven experience in a senior operational or change management role, ideally within the cultural, creative or voluntary sector
- A strong track record of leading and embedding CRM or equivalent systems-level change within an organisation
- Demonstrable experience of developing operational policies and processes that work in practice, not just on paper
- Experience of leading culture change and bringing teams with you through periods of organisational transition
- Strong data literacy, with an understanding of what good data practice looks like and how to build it into an organisation's DNA
- A clear understanding of how effective operational infrastructure enables rather than constrains creativity and impact
- Experience working at or alongside senior leadership and board level
- Demonstrable experience of line managing staff, with a track record of supporting team development, wellbeing and performance
- Excellent communication and facilitation skills, with the ability to translate complex systems thinking into language that makes sense to a wide range of people
- A genuine passion for The Music Works' mission and the young people we serve
- Ability to hold multiple competing priorities and work independently with little supervision
- A collaborative, transparent and values-led leadership approach, consistent with The Music Works' commitment to Self-Determination Theory and trauma-informed practice
- Experience of conducting or contributing to an organisational review

Desirable

- Knowledge of impact measurement frameworks relevant to youth, health or creative programmes
- Understanding of the particular challenges facing medium-sized third sector organisations navigating growth
- Familiarity with charity-sector CRM platforms

Benefits

- Pension at 3% of basic salary
- Flexible working
- Staff training and development opportunities
- Cycle to work scheme (shower facilities at Gloucester hub)
- Enhanced Maternity policy
- Wellbeing and social programme for staff
- Annual leave entitlement: 22 days plus bank holidays
- All the days between Christmas and New Year
- Your birthday off
- Additional unpaid leave by request
- Access to Perks at Work
- A passionate and committed staff team with an inclusive working culture

How to apply

Please submit your current CV and a detailed cover letter explaining how you meet the person specification and your previous experience in line with the role responsibilities

Send your application to recruitment@themusicworks.org.uk by Sunday 18th October. **Applications will be reviewed as they are received, and suitable candidates will be invited to interview on a rolling basis. We encourage early applications, as we reserve the right to close the recruitment process and appoint before the closing date.**

If you have any questions about the role, please feel free to contact us.

Interviews are due to take place on Tuesday 27th October and Thursday 29th October.

The use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT or similar) is permitted in the application process. However, we strongly advise against copying and pasting answers from AI tools, as this often results in generic responses. We encourage you to showcase your own experiences, voice, and style in your answers and note that this is particularly important given the communication expectations of this role.

Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our organisation, and we promote equal opportunities. We believe this can be achieved through attracting, developing, and retaining a diverse range of staff from many different backgrounds who reflect the community we serve. We encourage applications from all backgrounds.

We use positive action under section 159 of the Equality Act in relation to disability or race. This means that if we have two candidates of equal merit in our process, we will seek to take forward the disabled, or global majority candidate in order to diversify our staff team.

In line with The Music Works safeguarding policy, this job is subject to enhanced DBS checks and satisfactory references.